

Statement of Melanie Murray

Appropriations Committee

February 23, 2017

My name is Melanie Murray. I live in New London, Connecticut. Thank you for allowing me to submit a statement in support of the Connecticut Legal Rights Project and Attorney Karyl Lee Hall and Tanisha Gilbert who helped me to keep my mental health services at the Southeastern Mental Health Authority.

Some time ago, one of my treating staff at SMHA filed an Order of Protection against me with the Norwich Superior Court. The facts that the staff member claimed were not consistent with the notes in my medical record. The order was dismissed by the court but as a result of the order, I was discharged from my services at SMHA. CLRP helped me to file a grievance. As a result of the grievance, my services at SMHA were restored. We met with the senior staff at SMHA and they agreed that a policy should be created to keep what happened to me from happening again to someone else.

I am grateful for CLRP's support in this case. Attorney Hall and Tanisha Gilbert presented a strong argument in my grievance and accompanied me to my meeting with SMHA. The outcome helped me to cope with the anxiety and bad feelings that resulted from the unjustified action of the staff member against me. I hope that the legislature will continue to fund CLRP so that they can continue to help people like me.